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U. S. - Moroccan Relations

in the Context of the Anfa Conference

Karim Bejjit

Abstract

This essay seeks to shed new light on the intricate course of U.S.-Moroccan relations following the landing of American troops on the Atlantic coasts of Morocco. The Anfa Conference and Sultan Mohamed V's dinner meeting with President Roosevelt marked an important stage in the process of Moroccan struggle for independence. Roosevelt's personal interest in the Moroccan situation may have accentuated the inconsistencies in U.S. foreign policy in the 1940s regarding the French colonial empire and confronted its fundamental idealism with the exigencies of pragmatic politics. The vicissitudes of the war and America's deep commitment to its French ally as well as its efforts to contain the spreading influence of communism across North Africa compelled the American administration to generally adopt an ambivalent position vis-à-vis Moroccan nationalist movement in its fierce pursuit for independence.

Keywords: U.S.-Moroccan relations, Anfa Conference, FDR, Sultan Mohamed ben Youssef, Istiqlal Party; Tangier Speech

Introduction

Accounts of Moroccan-American relations have often emphasized the fortuitous origins of these relations especially in an era marked by limited diplomatic contact with the burgeoning United States and even by acts of hostility toward it from the so-called Barbary States (Roberts & Roberts, 2008). What is more intriguing is the remarkable longevity of these relations despite the lack of extensive commercial and political interests between the two nations that could justify such enduring mutual esteem. Historical annals bear witness to a steady and peaceful course of relations devoid of any dramatic incidents. For over a century, and aside from the peace treaties of 1786 and 1836, U.S. consuls established in Tangier had little to report to their home authorities. The Perdicaris affair of 1904 was a peculiar diplomatic oddity that gained momentary attention in the American press mostly as a campaign slogan (Davis, 1941, p. 517; Hall, 1971, p. 341).

Nevertheless, the enduring value of U.S.-Moroccan relations today is largely the fruit of this benign legacy. It has become an established custom for government officials of both countries to indulge in a graceful narrative of how Morocco was

the first country to recognize the independence of the nascent republic and how Sultan Mawlay Suleiman made a generous gift of a house in the old medina of Tangier to Consul John Mulloony in 1822. Although it has ceased to have an official character, the house is the seat of the American Legation and is still cherished as the oldest American public property outside the U.S. In recent decades, Morocco has been viewed in U.S. media and in the official circles as a strategic ally in the MENA region and a reliable partner in the global war on terrorism. Besides close security cooperation, Morocco has concluded important military and trade agreements with the United States and benefited from various aid programs.

Within the Moroccan context, historians have expounded on the decisive intervention of the United States during World War II and its consequent impact on the colonial regimes in North Africa. The landing of American troops on the Moroccan coasts as part of Operation Torch in November 1942 inaugurated a new phase in modern Moroccan history and helped raise political consciousness among the Moroccan elite (Baida, 2014). U.S.-Moroccan relations, in particular, gained momentum following the historic meeting between President Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) and Sultan Mohamed Ben Youssef during the Anfa Conference held in January 1943. No record has provided more vivid a description of the long and friendly conversation between the two leaders than the account offered by FDR's own son, Elliot in his memoir titled *As He Saw it* (1946). Elliot Roosevelt (1946), who served as the president's military attaché, noted that the dinner meeting was attended by British Prime Minister Winston Churchill who, seated on the left side of the president, "grew more and more disgruntled" as the conversation between FDR and the sultan dwelt on the "wealth of natural resources" in the country (p. 110). The Sultan made no secret of his wish to engage American support in promoting "modern educational and health standards" (Roosevelt, 1946, p. 110) in Morocco and shaping the future development plans of the country. On the political plane, the sultan, it is stated, was particularly elated by FDR's remark that "the postwar scene and the pre-war scene would, of course, differ sharply, especially as they related to the colonial question" (Roosevelt, 1946, p. 111).

Elliot's account makes frequent reference to Churchill's sense of malaise as he listened to the cordial exchange between the sultan and the president. Evidently, Roosevelt's critical views of European colonial empires were both vexing and alarming. In the following years, the substance of Roosevelt's conversation with the sultan became the object of ongoing speculation (Sangmuah 1992; Stenner, 2014). In their correspondence, U.S. officials often denied the claim that FDR promised to support Moroccan ambitions for independence. This essay looks at the broader context of U.S.-Moroccan relations in the years that followed the Anfa Conference and focuses on the impact of that single dinner meeting on the political evolution of Morocco toward independence. While they did not amount to a formal declaration, the progressive views voiced by FDR over the meeting emboldened the sultan and nationalist leaders to embrace a militant agenda and oppose French colonial policies. For the Moroccan nationalists who took to heart the liberal principles professed in the Atlantic charter and the four freedoms announced in FDR's speech in 1941, the old status quo guaranteed by the Protectorate Treaty of 1912 was inadmissible. France, after all, was in no measure to honor the terms of the treaty.

Politically divided, it depended on the Allies for help to liberate its own occupied territories. A year after the Anfa meeting, Moroccan nationalist leaders would present a manifesto calling for independence under the sultan. This triggered a new phase of conflict with the French colonial authorities and plunged the country into a vicious cycle of violence and repression.

Roosevelt and the Sultan

The specific nature of FDR's pledges to the sultan has stirred a continuing controversy among historians. Given that no official record of the dinner meeting exists other than the personal accounts of some of those who were present notably FDR's son, Elliot, and the Crown Prince Hassan, the exchange between the sultan and the president became a subject of interpretation and contestation. The gist of this controversy centered on the political significance of the meeting and its powerful impact on the nationalist agenda in Morocco in the following years. Several historians have emphasized the relentless efforts of the sultan and nationalist leaders to enlist American official support for independence and to engage the figure of FDR in their propaganda war against the French (Rivlin, 1982). A recent historian has even argued that Moroccan nationalists invented a "Roosevelt's myth" "to legitimize their claims in the eyes of Western diplomats and politicians" (Stenner, 2014, p. 526). The problem with this American-centered narrative is that it constructs a rigid and quite reductive view of Moroccan anti-colonial struggle, which was a multi-faceted and a dynamic process. More importantly, it makes light of Roosevelt's political convictions vis-a-vis French colonial regime in North Africa. FDR's attitude not only was the outcome of personal sympathy with an ambitious young sultan, but also rested on a firm belief in the right of subject peoples to govern themselves and take advantage of their own natural resources.

There is a substantial amount of archival information that is now available involving FDR's subsequent correspondence with the sultan testifying to his keen interest in the future status of Morocco. What transpires from these letters is that FDR's sympathetic views were not fully shared by the members of his own government for whom the ongoing war-time conditions and the necessity of safeguarding the interests of such a strategic ally as France formed a more urgent priority. However, it is important to keep in mind that for the sultan and the nationalists, FDR and the United States represented a positive force of change that opened a new frontier for political action against a protecting nation, which seemed to have betrayed its promises and lost its credibility.

FDR's letters to the sultan and his exchanged memos with Secretary of State Cordell Hull and other officials relating to the Moroccan situation are now accessible online from the State Department.¹ There are numerous records available at the National Archives website on the Anfa Conference. The Morocco file consists

¹ "Franklin D. Roosevelt Administration (1933–1945)." Retrieved from <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/roosevelt-fd>

of 44 pages of digitized official correspondence organized in a chronological order.² The American Legation library in Tangier also holds a file that contains several records relating to FDR's visit to Morocco including a four-page typed report on the events of January 22, 1943, drawn from the notes of Harry Hopkins, FDR's close advisor. There is also an excerpt from a log kept during the president's trip to Casablanca providing significant details on the visit.

It can be gleaned from these documents that contact between FDR and the sultan began in November 1942 after the landing of U.S. troops on the Atlantic coast of Morocco. The purport of this early correspondence bears upon the immediate war affairs and the long tradition of friendship and respect that united Morocco and U.S.³ Other documents offer substantial information on the dinner meeting on January 22. The sultan, it is stated, arrived at the villa Dar Essaada at 7:40 p.m. accompanied by the Crown Prince, the Grand Vizier, and Chief of Protocol. They "were magnificently attired in white silk robes and came bearing several presents – a gold-mounted dagger for the President in a beautiful inlaid teakwood case, and two golden bracelets and a high golden tiara for Mrs. Roosevelt" (Hopkins, 1943, p. 531). The presents were duly acknowledged by Mrs. Roosevelt in a subsequent letter to the sultan. The documents say very little about the exchange between the sultan and FDR save that the sultan and his delegation departed at 10:10 p.m. and were followed by Prime Minister Churchill, General Nogues, the Resident General, and General Patton. De Gaulle was not invited to the dinner but was received by FDR alone shortly afterwards.

The following day, still motivated by the encouraging words of the president, the sultan dispatched his Grand Vizier and Chief of Protocol to meet Hopkins. The minutes of the secret meeting recorded by Brigadier General Wilbur reveal that the sultan was curious to know American plans for the future of Morocco and particularly Roosevelt's position regarding a tentative proposal of an eventual U.S. takeover of the French and Spanish protectorate mandates. Hopkins's response was diplomatic and evasive.⁴ His reserved reaction would set a pattern of U.S. political conduct in subsequent years. A number of American historians (Sangmuah, 1992, p. 132; Stenner, 2014, p. 526) have characterized the persistent attempts of the Sultan and the nationalists to elicit from U.S. consuls clear statements as well as concrete action in support of the Moroccan cause as acts of nuisance and manipulation resulting in a great deal of embarrassment for the U.S. administration. In contrast, the sultan's overtures show the great confidence he placed in

² "Morocco: Diplomatic Correspondence, 1933-1945, FDR-FDRPSF." Retrieved from <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/16618683>

³ The sultan's letter in Arabic (dated 12 **Dhul-Qa'dah** 1361/ November 21, 1942) is a response to both a letter and telegram sent by FDR. The French and English translations of the Arabic version carry an earlier date, which is obviously a mistake. There is also copy of FDR's letter to the sultan carrying no date or signature. The heading at the top indicates that the version was intended for the press and bears a later date (1942, November 23). Judging from its contents, the letter may be the original one sent to the sultan acknowledged in his response.

⁴ Wilbur Notes. (1943). Retrieved from

<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1941-43/d382>

Roosevelt's power to redefine the rules of the game and to enforce a new process of political change. Above all, they reflect his loss of faith in the ability of the Franco-Spanish protectorate systems to serve the interests of the Moroccans.

Not discouraged by Hopkins' circumspect attitude, and wishing to take advantage of the opportune political conjuncture, the sultan instructed Thami El Glaoui, then still a close and trusted advisor, to open channels of communication with the British and American Consuls with the aim of probing their views regarding the proposition, of establishing a "joint protection" with France over Morocco. To get around French control of the foreign policy decision-making imposed by the terms of the treaty, the sultan also solicited the "appointment of diplomatic representatives who would have direct access to him" (Hull, 1943, p. 738). The instructions of the Department of State to the U.S. consul in Casablanca echoed the same views expressed by their British counterparts namely that "it would be both impracticable and impolitic to support any such policies or ambitions as ascribed to the Sultan" (Hull, 1943, p. 739).

Secretary of State Cordell Hull was the principal architect of the policy of non-interference in French domestic affairs in Morocco. When he reported on his meeting with the sultan in Oujda on June 24, 1943, Robert D. Murphy, Roosevelt's special representative in North Africa, was aware of the policy line adopted by the State Department. He observed, "I have been careful to avoid several suggestions emanating from Rabat for a 'confidential' discussion with the Sultan, as I feel that this is a matter in which the Department would desire the greatest prudence exercised" (Murphy, 1943, p. 743). On the other hand, Hull was concerned about the repressive measures taken by the French colonial authorities against North African populations. He accordingly directed U.S. consuls to report on the conduct of French administration and signify to French officials that Americans "have a natural interest in the native situation in French North Africa, [...] and that this interest may be expected to increase in the future" (Stettinius, 1943, p. 746).

The reserved response of U.S. diplomatic agents did not dissuade the sultan or the nationalists from continuing their campaign. On the morning of January 11, 1944, two nationalist leaders, Mohamed Lyazidi and Idriss Mhamedi (who later became Minister of Interior in the first cabinet of independent Morocco), paid a visit to the American consulate in Rabat and were received by the vice consul, Donald A. Dumont. The purpose of their visit was to submit a copy of the Independence Manifesto and, interestingly enough, a letter intended for President Roosevelt. The vice consul, who had no clear instructions as how to deal with such a situation, could only point out "the impropriety of transmitting communications from political groups in a foreign country to the President of the United States" (Dumont, 1944, para 4).

The letter, of which a copy is preserved at the Tangier American Legation library, reveals the nationalists' high hopes in the American administration and especially the president. Addressing President Roosevelt, the signatories stated that,

Knowing your high sense of justice and your great love of liberty, we are convinced that our movement will find benevolent sympathy not only near Your Excellency, but also with your government and the great American

democracy ... You did us the signal honor of coming to our country and you encouraged U.S. thereby to continue the struggle by the side of the Allies, for our freedom, the Liberation of France and the Triumph of the humanitarian principles for which the Allies are making so many sacrifices. (Abdeljalil, Belafrej, Zeghari, Bahim & Chami, 1944, para 2).

Of particular interest here is the report of U.S. Consul General Frederick Mayer to the State Department dated January 12, 1944. Mayer expressed strong disinclination to encourage the nationalists' activities and even pressed for a firm statement from his government to this effect:

If Department wants to nip in bud this movement before it could reach serious proportions, I respectfully suggest desirability of official pronouncement to the effect that American Government cannot look with favor upon political movements in areas associated in war effort which might hamper progress of war. (Mayer, 1944, p. 532)

U.S. records show that this particular letter with its edgy tone caught Roosevelt's attention, and he desired to see the State Department's response before it was dispatched. Despite the escalation of events and the arrest of nationalist members by French authorities reported by Mayer in the following weeks, the State Department's letter, dated January 31 and approved by FDR, expressed mild concern. It called for restraint and advised, "the Sultan and the nationalist groups to avoid challenging the authority of the French and thereby undermining the security of the zone at this time" (Hull, 1944, p. 537). Mayer's pleas for a clear U.S. policy regarding the surging political activities of the nationalists warranted a discreet hint that the State Department took into account "what appears to be a sympathetic interest in the native problem of Morocco in the highest quarters" (Murray, 1944, p. 537).

FDR gave further evidence of his political sentiment when he decided to send his autographed photograph to Pasha Glaoui later in January. Secretary Hull signified that given the explosive political situation in Morocco, "it might be advisable to defer this presentation until such time as the agitation has calmed down" (Hull, 1944, P.36). FDR replied in a later memo that he did not see how his photograph could "change the future of history," and prophesied that "in regard to Morocco something new is bound to happen in the next ten years, I do not think that a population, which is ninety per cent Moors, should be run permanently by France" (Roosevelt, 1944, p. 35).

Post-War American Policies vis-a-vis the Moroccan Question

What was the sultan's role in this whole process? How much support was he willing to give to the nationalist movement in particular in the light of the many constraints imposed on him by the terms of the Protectorate treaty and the repressive policies of the General Residency? Until then, the margin of maneuver available to him was limited and discrete action seemed an advisable strategy to avert open French reprisal. The nationalists' move in January 1944, however, could not have

been undertaken without the tacit approval of the Sultan. The published memoirs of some of these nationalists underline the fact that nationalist activities were planned in concert with the sultan and his close circle (Al-Wazzānī, 1986, pp. 97-102; Qādirī, 1997; pp. 174-175). Al-Wazzānī notes in his memoir that on January 13, 1944 following the presentation of the Independence manifesto, the sultan summoned the Pashas and requested their opinions on the nationalists' demands. All but the Pasha of Fes supported the call for independence (Al-Wazzānī, 1982, p. 97).

The death of FDR in April 1945 and the victory of the Allies in the war gave a real boost to the French colonial authorities to crack down on the burgeoning independence movement and its representative entity—the Istiqlal Party. While the Truman administration did not display any interest in supporting Moroccan nationalists and undermining French interests, U.S. consuls were not blind to the fast deteriorating situation in North Africa and the rising wave of nationalism across the region. In the broad geo-political context of the post-war and the settling of the Cold War era, Morocco's strategic importance diminished significantly. The Department of State records related to Morocco in the post-war years focus on U.S. efforts to restore the international status of Tangier and end Spanish control over the city. Thus, in August 1945, delegations from France, Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States held several meetings in Paris and agreed to a new and provisional regime for Tangier that guaranteed the international character of the city and the rights of powers signatories of the 1923 statute. Given American political ascendancy at the international scene, France and Britain invited the United States to take part in the administration of the city. In his response to the French ambassador in Washington, the acting secretary of state stipulated that American participation in the administration of Tangier shall not cause any modification or prejudice to the rights and privileges acquired by the United States and enjoyed by its nationals and ressortissants prior to the introduction of Tangier Statute in 1923.⁵ Over the next years, the refusal of the U.S. administration to recognize the specific terms of the French Protectorate treaty relating to U.S. extra-territorial privileges ensured by the old treaties of 1786 and 1836 with Morocco proved to be a point of contention (Azzou, 2005, pp. 110-111). It triggered a long legal dispute with France that reached the International Court of Justice in 1950. The case was eventually ruled in favor of the French government in August 1952.⁶

The sultan, on his part, saw in the restitution of the international status of Tangier an opportunity to assert his sovereignty and bring international attention to the political crisis in Morocco. In an era marked by anti-colonial struggle and the

⁵ Acheson D. (1945, September 22). The Acting Secretary of State to the French Ambassador (Bonnet). Retrieved from <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d644>⁶ Case Concerning Rights of Nationals of The United States of America in Morocco (France V. United States of America) (1952, August 27). Retrieved from <https://www.icj-cij.org/files/case-related/11/011-19520827-JUD-01-00-EN.pdf>

⁶ Case Concerning Rights of Nationals of The United States of America in Morocco (France V. United States of America) (1952, August 27). Retrieved from <https://www.icj-cij.org/files/case-related/11/011-19520827-JUD-01-00-EN.pdf>

surge of nationalist movements, political groups and organizations across North Africa succeeded in establishing contact and securing support from the newly created Arab League in Cairo and from its first Secretary General Abderahman Azzam Basha. The declared attachment of Morocco's political elite to their Arab and Islamic roots undermined France's influence and the policies it endeavored to pursue in Morocco. The sultan's visit to Tangier in April 1947 was inscribed within this new post-war dynamic. Though long envisaged, it came at a propitious time and added new momentum to the active agenda of the nationalists.

The details of this visit were recorded by the historian Abdellah Al-Jirārī, who served in several capacities in the Royal Court in the 1940s, and the nationalist leader Allal [Al-Fāṣī](#). In his memoir of Sultan Mohamed V, Al-Jirārī notes that the Tangier journey, which lasted from Wednesday, April 9 to Sunday April, 13, was a historic event that further demonstrated the unanimous support and loyalty enjoyed by the sultan in the Spanish and international zone of his kingdom. Arriving in Tangier by train from Rabat after a ceremonious stopover in Asila, the sultan was driven to the palace of the Mendoub amid large crowds of cheering bystanders raising colorful banners. In the evening, the municipality organized a show of fireworks in celebration of the event. The following day, Thursday April 10, he received in his Palace at Mendoubiya, representatives of foreign powers, as well as dignitaries from the Muslim and Jewish communities. The first of these diplomatic officials was the American Consul General in Tangier, Paul H. Alling who had just been nominated U.S. ambassador to Syria. The Sultan then received the representatives of Great Britain, Spain, and France, successively, and made the following statement:

In this informal meeting, and in the presence of representatives of the friendly countries, we are pleased to extend our sincere thanks to you for the affection you have shown us and to the Moroccan people on this historic occasion, this is not surprising, since the bonds of affection we have had since ancient times were built by our noble ancestors. ... You are well acquainted that Morocco participated in the last war and contributed its sons and all its means until the final victory was achieved, and since nations are now demanding rights that suit the present time, it is only right for the Moroccan people to obtain their legitimate rights and to achieve what we hope for and what the Moroccan people yearns to like all other nations. (Al-Jirārī & Jawharī, 2006, p. 131).

After this reception, the sultan delivered a long and powerful speech to the public that went down in the annals of history as the speech that launched the sultan's formal public engagement to reverse the status quo. The speech laid emphasis on the Islamic identity of the Moroccan nation and its strong ties with the Arab countries through their newly established entity the Arab League. It also called attention to the strong bonds that had united the royal family with the Moroccan people and made repeated references to the necessity for the Moroccan people to attain their legitimate rights. More significantly, the speech made no ceremonious reference to the work of the French colonial authorities, and the omission was

interpreted as the sultan's new disposition to resist the imposed policies of the residency. George Joffé argues that the Tangier speech not only revealed the sultan's endorsement of the nationalist agenda, but also paved the way for the urban-based Istiqlal party to spread its influence in the rural parts of the country where it lacked grassroots base (Joffé, 1985, pp. 289-290).

The escalating events that followed in the ensuing years and the French hardline policy to curb the sultan's ascendant influence and popularity among the Moroccan population and its political elite only served to radicalize his position vis-a-vis the French colonial establishment. Beside infusing local domestic public enthusiasm and confirming his sovereignty over the northern region of the country, which had been under Spanish control since 1912, the sultan's visit to Tangier enabled him to reach out to the international community through its diplomatic agents represented in Tangier and to receive extensive media coverage both in local and foreign newspapers. If during the Anfa conference the sultan emerged as a head of State struggling to secure American recognition and support for his country's cause, the Tangier visit acclaimed him as a popular and legitimate sovereign who inspired hope and confidence among his people in the future. On Friday, the sultan headed to the great mosque of Tangier and delivered the *Khutba* (sermon) to the excited worshippers. While his sermon did not contain any clear political messages apart from exhortations to hold to the teachings of Islam, it endorsed his image as a devout and religious leader.

The outcome of this extraordinary royal visit to Tangier for the colonial authorities in Rabat and the Parisian official circles was extremely disappointing. By appointing Resident General Eric Labonne in early 1946, French government had aimed to appease the tense political situation in Morocco and introduce new reforms commensurate with rising demands of nationalist movements across North Africa. However, Labonne's agricultural and educational reform policies as well as political reconciliation failed to contain the demands of the nationalists for a political process culminating in Moroccan independence. The apparently lenient policy and bill of reforms of Labonne did not appeal to the French colonists either. The tragic incident of the ben M'sik massacre of April 7, 1947 on the eve of the sultan's visit to Tangier, reported in international newspapers including the *New York Times*, had raised tensions further. Labonne was succeeded by General Alphonse Juin, a military figure of a less tractable nature whose term would see the further deterioration of relations with the sultan and the nationalists.

How did the American authorities react to these changes in Morocco? Contemporary U.S. diplomatic correspondence reveals that the situation in the country was being watched carefully. The situation of North Africa was far from reassuring and the policies adopted in Paris and implemented by the colonial authorities in Tunis, Algiers, and Rabat did not seem to meet the rising demands of North African peoples whose agitations for better political and social conditions were now strongly supported by the Arab League. A new agency, the Bureau du Moghreb Arabe, was established in Cairo, which brought together the major political parties in the three countries. In July 1947 by instructions from the nationalist movement and the approval of the sultan, Mahdi Bennouna travelled to

New York and established an office to lobby for the Moroccan cause among the members of United Nations (Perkins, 1976, p. 66). The fruit of his efforts and of his office will begin to show only in the early 1950s when the Moroccan case was debated in the UN General Assembly sessions.

Meanwhile in light of the activities of French communists in France and Morocco American officials in Morocco began to sound the alarm, and frequently advised the Department of State in Washington that although the nationalists had expressed allegiance to the United States, they may in desperate measures resort to Soviet political support in the United Nations or even clandestinely to bring the desired change in their country. What used to be an exclusively French colonial affair had now become a delicate issue for American government. The currents of Cold War politics, it seems, had swept over this part of the world too. The American government was unwilling to allow Soviet influence to penetrate this strategic area.

On June 10, 1947, only two months after the sultan's visit to Tangier, Secretary of State George Marshall wrote to the U.S. embassy in Paris outlining his view of the North African situation. He noted that to avert the risk of the Indo-China scenario, the solution lies in "leading North Africans [being] approached with some plan guaranteeing evolution toward self-government while concurrently safeguarding economic development of country and legitimate French interests in area by integration into French Union" (Marshall, 1948, p. 686). He urged the ambassador to summon U.S. agents in North Africa to confer on the situation there and propose a course of action. The conference indeed took place a week later in the American embassy in Paris and was attended by representatives of U.S. missions in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, and France. The report of their findings presented by Ambassador Jefferson Caffery was detailed and contained a road map to resolve the crisis that was fast developing in North Africa. After outlining U.S. principles and orientations in taking this initiative, the participants including Paul H. Alling the Consul-General of Tangier who chaired the meeting, proposed that the French government be approached and urged to introduce "long-range plans to guide both North African Protectorates (Morocco and Tunisia) toward dominion status" (Caffery, 1947, p. 693). Such a plan, they pointed out, should have a definite time-frame and should involve concrete actions to establish "without delay a solid basis of mutual trust" (Caffery, 1947, p. 693). These actions include "freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, rapid amplification of the school program, administrative reforms, initiation to democratic ways through municipal elections, etc." (Caffery, 1947, p. 693).

In retrospect, these proposed reforms received little heeding from the French authorities who preferred to pursue a stick policy in their North African colonies. The American government on its part continued to ignore the nationalists' appeals for support, and often used its political influence to offset the criticism and condemnation of France in the United Nations. The raging Indochina war and French grim prospects there compelled the U.S. government to support French economically, militarily, and politically. The establishment of U.S. air bases in Morocco in 1951 without prior consultation or consent of the sultan were part of the broad framework of their collaboration. However, starting from 1953 after the French had deposed Sultan Mohamed Ben Youssef, the U.S. government was itself

under pressure from Arab and Asian countries to take a firm position against France in the United Nations general Assembly. In the end, France had to reverse its colonial policy and acquiesce to the demands of the nationalist movement by reinstating the sultan and bringing to end the long protectorate phase.

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